



# **Rowing BC Competition Review Taskforce**

## **Taskforce Report: Short Term Recommendations**

### **PROGRESS/OUTCOMES**

**November 2019**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In April 2019 Rowing BC and the Rowing BC Competition Review Task Force (CRT) completed the *Taskforce Report: Short Term Recommendations*. The CRT made 15 concrete short-term recommendations that reached across all competition streams.

In preparation for the Rowing BC AGM, Rowing BC and the CRT have created this summary report. This new report is intended to update CRT members, and then the broader rowing community in BC, on the progress that has been made towards accomplishing the short-term recommendations. The process the CRT continues to go through provides a significant step forward in collaborative efforts to improve the competition system in BC.

#### **PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT**

Rowing BC staff engaged with Local Organizing Committees from across the province to get feedback on the five primary topics that required further input from community organizers, being: regatta boat pools, an expanded definition of the novice race category, a more meaningful senior racing circuit, and the continued expansion of para inclusion throughout regattas in the province. Summaries of responses to phone calls on these specific topics are included below.



## **SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Develop a framework that supports rowing organizations and local organizing committees (LOC) to develop boat pools as part of their events.**

**Stream(s):** Junior, High School, Senior, Masters

**Action Step(s):**

- Place boat pool information on the “Regatta Sanctioning” page on the Rowing BC website;
- Engage with LOCs about their thoughts regarding the concept of boats pools at events:
  - o Nearly all respondents saw boat pools as a good idea;
  - o Several stressed that organization of boat pools should remain with coaches (community), rather than be ‘formalized’ through LOC’s (commodity);
  - o Several regattas already informally using boat pools with differing approaches.

### **2. Develop more flexible novice events with fewer category restrictions in consultation with stakeholders with the distinct intention of reducing barriers to participation.**

**Stream(s):** Junior, Senior, Masters

**Action Step(s):**

- The Rowing BC Regatta Committee will define *possible* alternative definitions of novice;
- Engage with LOCs about their thoughts regarding the concept of novice categories:
  - o Most respondents thought the current definition is appropriate;
  - o All respondents outlined similar intentions for having novice events. A summary of that intent could be captured these ways:
    - To encourage people to have a good race experience;
    - To encourage interest in racing; and
    - To match the athlete pathway.

### **3. Explore strategies to support the inclusion of Interior Juniors in more regatta opportunities.**

**Stream(s):** Junior

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC to send a list of regatta opportunities to each club that directly highlights which events would be a good choice for each stream of athletes to help guide clubs to be accessing the events that are best designed for them. To be initiated for 2020 regatta season; and
- Rowing BC staff to follow up individually with Interior Clubs to ensure the list makes sense and addresses club needs. To be facilitated via group phone call early 2020.



**4. Explore ways for all regions of the province with high school rowing to work together for the purpose of harmonizing opportunities offered.**

**Stream(s):** High School

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC staff to meet with high school rowing stakeholders to determine desired directions and outcomes; and
- Rowing BC to facilitate face to face meeting with stakeholders to determine next steps. Meeting to be held by early 2020.

**5. Explore with the Independent Schools the idea of an Independent Schools Championships.**

**Stream(s):** High School

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC to facilitate a meeting with these groups to find out what the best fit going forward will be. Meeting to be held by early 2020.

**6. Develop additional high-performance racing opportunities for Seniors at existing regattas including more flexible race categories.**

**Stream(s):** Senior

**Action Steps:**

- The Rowing BC Regatta Committee will define *possible* alternative definitions of senior;
- Engage with clubs and LOCs regarding their thoughts about greater inclusion of Seniors:
  - o Topic is already top of mind for many clubs and LOCs;
  - o A common theme was to have good racing for athletes who don't want to compete against National Team or Elite athletes;
  - o One concept to make this a tangible change would be to identify four regattas in 2020 that have the capacity to offer senior races. These could help create a focus and generate increased interest (possible regattas: Nanaimo, Challenge West, Metro and Midsummer Madness).

**7. Develop additional events throughout the province that incorporate social aspects.**



**Stream(s):** Senior, Masters

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC promoted possible social events and released an RFP to host these events;
- Rowing BC offered to provide the administrative and logistical support, and to help advertise;
- Uptake was initially high, with seven clubs initially engaging with Rowing BC's RFP process;
- Only 1 club followed through – this concept needs to be reviewed.

**8. Develop a “Rowing BC Senior Yearly Training Plan (YTP)” to support more meaningful alignment between training and racing periods.**

**Stream(s):** Senior

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC provincial coach to create YTP to cater for various pinnacle events;
- YTP to be shared with stakeholders for comment.

**9. Explore including Open 1x and 2- events in future Rowing BC-hosted performance regattas to provide opportunities for both university and non-university Senior athletes.**

**Stream(s):** Senior, University

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC to consider this when planning the 2020 Provincial Championships during annual planning meetings happening through to December 2019.

**10. Explore developing a diverse, well attended small boat university regatta at Burnaby Lake.**

**Stream(s):** University

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC staff to engage with universities regarding dates and formats; and
- Rowing BC staff to facilitate meetings with organizers and stakeholders to move forward.



**11. Explore ways to integrate Junior athletes into the Brown Cup experience in a meaningful way that expands the profile of university rowing.**

**Stream(s):** Junior, High School, University

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC Executive Director met with the Athletic Directors of UVIC and UBC to discuss a larger vision for Brown Cup to make it more sponsor-worthy and promote rowing better overall. Athletic Directors are supportive of trialing a consistent location for the next three years (Victoria). Willingness to explore how to include high school athletes either as supporters or on the field of play;
- Rowing BC Executive Director met with the Head Coaches at UVIC and UBC to discuss which options would best suit moving towards this goal. Outcomes: Brown Cup to be hosted in Victoria for the next 3 years. Rowing BC to be involved in developing a broader organizing committee (including additional groups such as the Greater Victoria Sport Tourism Commission, a stronger partnership with local hotels, developing a broadcast plan and other assets that can be sponsored);
- Currently working to identify a Chair for the LOC;
- Further meetings held with key UVic/UBC alumni with the aim of forming an overarching strategy/vision for the regatta to benefit each program and rowing in BC; and
- Rowing BC to set up a meeting with the Junior and High School programs that might be involved in the next steps (to be facilitated following formation of the OC).

**12. Develop a BC Coastal Regatta series in partnership with existing coastal organizations.**

**Stream(s):** Coastal

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC to administratively support VCRC in running a Beach Sprints event;
- Rowing BC to create a Coastal Rowing Taskforce. The Taskforce work with the existing coastal organizations to develop a recognizable framework for coastal regattas and the development of additional coastal hubs (clubs or interested groups) that could get involved in the hosting of events. Taskforce to be formed late 2019.



### **13. Develop education opportunities for Umpires, Coaches and Athletes in Coastal Rowing.**

**Stream(s):** Coastal

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC invited umpires and coaches to attend the coastal camps planned in 2019 as an experience opportunity (unfortunately, camps were cancelled due to low registrations);
- Rowing BC will research current standards of education that are already available where coastal rowing is established and use this as a platform to develop a Canadian model. Intended outcome to create a Coastal Chapter to Umpire training and the RCA LTR Coach course. Currently being undertaken;
- Rowing BC to work with RCA to develop coastal-appropriate language in the next iteration of the RCA LTAD model.

### **14. Develop and promote a calendar of pre-existing BC and Pacific-Northwest coastal events.**

**Stream(s):** Coastal

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC collected the dates of these events and added them to the online calendar and organized promotion on social media.

### **15. Explore strategies to support the inclusion of para athletes in more regatta opportunities.**

**Stream(s):** Para

**Action Steps:**

- Rowing BC staff to determine and publish a para-adjusted Gold Medal Standard (GMS) so that para athletes can row alongside able-bodied athletes and have the chance to win based on adjusted times;
- GMS enables para athletes to enter any race rather than needing a dedicated para race;
- Responses re Para-adjusted time gathered directly from LOC's across BC:
  - o All respondents saw this as a good idea, and encouraged its development;
  - o Rowing BC created standard para language to include in regatta packages that makes it clear athletes do not require formal classification to participate in local events;
  - o This content is available on the Rowing BC website under the Regatta Sanctioning tab;
  - o Rowing BC to run an umpire education session during the next Annual Seminar in 2020 to discuss para classification and the umpires' role.